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By
E. M. NEWMAN

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A LAND OF SILENCE

COMPARED with the Western world, with its indescribable hubbub, Korea is a land of the most reposeful silence. There are no harsh pavements over which horses are tugging their lives out, no jostling of carts or dray-wagons, no hateful clamor that forbids quiet conversation, but a repose that is inherent and eternally restful. The rattle of the ironing sticks is not nerve-racking, but rather serves as a soporific to put all the world to sleep. Apart from this, one hears nothing but the few calls and echoes of human voices. What a delightfully quiet land is Korea! In the very heart of its great city, Seoul, you might experiment at midday in the latest methods of rest-cure and have all the world to help you.

Among other restful national features are the roadways. They are not surveyed at right angles and fenced in with barbed-wire, but are left to go where they please, do as they like, and take care of themselves, just as suits them. Hence a Korean road will find the easiest possible way over a hill. It will narrow itself down to a few inches rather than pick a quarrel with a rock or hummock in the way, or again to please you it will widen out like a Western turnpike. To follow a Korean road is like reading one of Barrie's novels: you meet with surprises and delights all along the way.

James S. Gale, in "Korea in Transition."

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KOREA AND ITS PEOPLE

By E. M. NEWMAN, *Lecturer and Traveler*

MENTOR
GRAVURES

SEOUL, CAPITAL
OF KOREA

KOREAN
THRONE ROOM

GROUP OF
KOREAN
VILLAGES



A BEAUTY SPOT IN THE PUBLIC PARK, SEOUL

MENTOR
GRAVURES

KOREAN BRIDE
AND GROOM

LIVING ROOM IN
KOREAN HOME

THE VILLAGE
BLACKSMITH

EDITOR'S NOTE:—The pictures in this number are reproduced, by special arrangement, from photographs by Mr. E. M. Newman.



HERE is a peculiar pathos in the extinction of a nation, and especially is this true when that nation is one whose history stretches back into the dim centuries, until it becomes lost in a labyrinth of myth and legend. Korea, as a nation, is passing. In the fifth century after Christ, it enjoyed a high state of civilization and was the source from which the half-savage tribes of Japan drew their first impetus toward culture. Twenty million people have now lost the right to study their own language. Freedom to travel, to express their opinions in press and public meetings, to pursue age-old customs—of these rights they have been deprived.

We are told by the Japanese that the Korean people are a degenerate nation; that they are incapable, intellectually inferior, and better off under Japanese rule than when they governed themselves. It is true that the Koreans have remained an extremely primitive people and, under the old rule, stagnation and decadence were evident; but whether these conditions could not have been eradicated, reforms introduced, and a better government established by the Koreans themselves, under wise control, is a question that arises. At the point of the sword, Korea has been forced to acquiesce in the virtual surrender of her independence.

"But," says one who has made a close study of Korean conditions, "under circumstances like these, the spirit of a nation never dies. It may sleep. Sometime it will awaken. In the dozen or so years that have elapsed since Japan assumed the protectorate of Korea she has done much for the physical, mental, and economic well-being of

the people, more, indeed, than Korea accomplished for herself in her previous three thousand years of civilization, even with the aid of the wisdom and the capital of European and American advisers in the quarter of a century immediately preceding Japanese control. Yet the hatred of Korea for Japan is far greater now than it was in the Middle Ages that gave it birth."



IN RURAL KOREA

Some Korean Customs

Koreans, like the Chinese, live in densely packed villages. Their houses are of mud, the roofs thatched and of straw; surrounding the villages are the farms of the inhabitants. They live in this way, because in former times it was considered safer to dwell in communities, rather than to be isolated on distant farms.



A TYPICAL KOREAN CITIZEN

In everyday street garb. Note that he carries the cane and fan, indicating superior social position

Everything is primitive; even the plow still used would be recognized by Elisha as similar to the one he left in the field when he went to Elijah. Should a fire break out in a village, the people whose house was burning would do all they could to extinguish the flames, while their neighbors would be seen standing on the roofs of their houses, each waving a pair of trousers to keep the fire spirit from coming their way.

Nearly everything is carried on a *jiggi*, a curious contrivance which is strapped to a man's back, enabling him to bear a heavy load; he thus comes into competition with a beast of burden. Another familiar character in the rural district is the water carrier, whose receptacles are large oil cans. He travels back and forth from the village well, carrying water to the homes.

K O R E A

Koreans do not drink cold water, nor are they consumers of tea and coffee. At meals they drink only hot water; and food for their ponies is always boiled and given to them just as hot as they can eat it. Even on a very warm day the little animals wade across a stream of cold clear water, never stopping to drink, waiting patiently until they reach an inn where they know all the hot water they want will be given to them.

The same fire that cooks the food is also used in warming the rooms in which the family lives. This is true in August, as well as December, and adds no little discomfort to the tourist who travels off the beaten path in Korea. Poor as most of the natives are, they are a kindly, hospitable people. In manners and customs, we observe the effect of Chinese influence, and yet they lack the chief characteristic of the Chinese, that of thrift. The average Korean is lavish with his money, and, if his own funds are exhausted, he is just as liberal with his friends' wealth.

Under the old regime, because of official oppression and robbery, truth was a stranger among the simple folk; they saw no more moral wrong in a lie than we see in a mere grammatical error. "You're a liar!" they exclaim, as we say, "You don't say so!" or "How odd!" Since the Japanese came into power, the official system of extortion has been abolished, and the people no longer are forced to tell untruths about their personal affairs, in order to withstand unbearable oppression.

Rural life in Korea has changed but little throughout the centuries, and a material difference may hardly be expected until after several generations of Japanese rule. Things modern filter slowly through the conservative minds of the Koreans. Huge straw hats are worn by itinerant vendors to protect them from the sun as well as from the rain. These enormous hats are also worn by mourners. The Korean believes a death in his family implies that he



A VILLAGE WELL



A KOREAN FAMILY

At home in the country

has committed some sin, and that he is to blame if a relative dies. He therefore goes into mourning for a period of three years and wears a huge hat to hide his face, on the theory that it is not worthy to be seen. White is the color for mourning, and as most of the people are in mourning most of the time, white is most commonly seen.

Bathing is sometimes recommended by the village doctor. The village bathroom is usually in the open air in a stream of water. In all the world, there is probably no country more burdened with doctors than Korea, many of whom are women. As far as knowledge of anatomy is concerned, the average native doctor has never heard of such a thing; yet the way he can use rusty implements upon the bodies of his patients without killing them would lead one to believe that he was a past master in anatomical science.

As long as a boy wears his hair braided and hanging down his back, he is addressed in familiar speech; his age has nothing to do with the form of address; the style of his hair settles that. Every married man must wear a top-knot; in Korea, except where the Japanese have interfered with time-honored laws, there is no possibility of a married man passing himself off as single, for the top-knot tells his story. In a family circle the oldest boy takes precedence; he is never addressed familiarly by his younger brothers or sisters; the form of address always is, "My Honorable Elder Brother." He stands next to his father, and lords it over his mother from the time he has the power of speech to command her.

The favorite dish of the Korean, *kimchie*, requires thirteen different ingredients to make it properly. The principal ones are fish, oil and garlic. This mixture is never eaten the day that it is prepared—but is permitted to stand from a week to a month. They have no dinner bells in the country; in fact, they need none. When the odorous *kimchie* is placed on the table, the whole neighborhood knows that dinner is served.

A woman of Korean birth is nameless. As a child, she receives a title, to distinguish her from other members of the



A BAGGAGE CARRIER

On his back is a native contrivance called a *jiggi*



THE LAUNDRESS

The earthen water cask is seen at the left

family; but when she marries, she loses not only her name but even her identity. She is known only as the "wife of Mr. So-and-so." Her husband addresses her in the Korean equivalent of "Say!" or "Look here, you!" A Korean considers the birth of a daughter as a calamity. An old gentleman, meeting an American, was told that a baby had been born in his home. "A son?" inquired the old man. "No," replied the American, "a daughter!" Whereupon the old Korean's face took on a deep expression of sympathy and he replied, "I am very sorry." Notwithstanding these curious social customs, we find among many Koreans a dignity in bearing and appearance that gives them a pleasing air of distinction.



ENGAGED

A young boy wears his hair turned up under a yellow straw hat, to signify that he is soon to enter the married state

wood. Head coverings are often made of horsehair.

Wages are about on an average with the lowest current wage in Japan. To a man twenty-five cents is usually paid per day, and to a woman about twelve cents. Korean civilization, as we now find it, is a mixture of Chinese and Japanese methods. The people of this strange out-of-the-way country have retrograded rather than progressed. Many of them have become reconciled to Japanese rule; but all agree that wages average lower today than before the coming of the Japanese.

Korea is preeminently a country

Korean Workmen

As a workman, the Korean cannot compare in ability either with a Japanese or a Chinese. Korea produces few works of art; aside from chests of interesting workmanship, there is little in the country to tempt the stranger. Like the Japanese, the Korean carpenter pulls his knife toward him instead of pushing it away from his body, as would an American. We lead a horse into a stall; they back the horse into the stall. We back a horse into the shafts; they pull the shafts up to the horse. And so almost everything they do is just the reverse of the way it is done in most other countries. In place of leather, the cobbler makes his shoes of



A YOUTHFUL WATER CARRIER AT THE WELL
Observe the style of his shoes and the long braid of hair

of villages, as it contains but one large city of 200,000; and that is its capital. There are a few other cities, with a population of about 50,000; but other than these few populous centers, all Korea consists of small settlements. This is truly a land of mountains. Go where you will, look where you like, the mountains confront you. One is never out of sight of soaring peaks. If



THE MAIN BUSINESS STREET, SEOUL

one could look down from an airplane, he would receive the impression that the mountains and hills of Korea had been sifted out of a great pepper-box, all over the face of the peninsula. Villages would be seen strung along all the rivers and waterways; but few chimneys would be in evidence, as very little manufacturing is done. Rice, soya beans and cotton rank highest in production by the farmers. Efforts at growing other cereals have as yet met with but little success; but with modern farming implements, there is no reason why wheat and corn cannot be cultivated, as the climate of Korea, warm in summer and cold in winter, is well adapted to the growing of grains. Field-grown ginseng is one of the most valuable products, and is exported in considerable quantities. Tobacco is also cultivated with success.

Koreans are very proud of Seoul* (se-ul'), their ancient capital. Away down the corridors of time, when the Western world was unknown and unheard of, the peninsula of Korea was making history. But, alas, the Muse of History did not sing in those days in the Land of Morning Calm, and so much that we know or claim to know of this remote country is dependent on tradition.

Today Seoul is rapidly becoming westernized. Among its recent innovations is a splendid hotel, as well equipped as are the best hotels in the United States. Many of the streets have been widened. Sanitation has been introduced. Stone and brick are used in modern buildings designed in Western style. These are but a few



NORTH GATE, SEOUL

A native carriage in the foreground

*Also spelled Seul.



NEW POST OFFICE AND BANK
In the Korean capital

of the changes that confront the visitor. On a central square is a new post office, and, directly opposite, the new building of the Bank of Cho-sen. "Cho-sen," of ancient Chinese-Korean origin, is the name the Japanese have substituted for "Korea." The port of Seoul is Chemulpo, at the mouth of the Han River. Fusan, on Korea Strait, is the nearest port to Japan.

The system of education in Korea has been changed to conform with that of Japan. Where formerly few of the Koreans attended school, education is now compulsory. Only the Japanese language is taught. The children are not permitted to study their own language, or even to speak it anywhere near the schoolhouse. The educational development of Korean girls has worked wonders, both in their appearance and in their ambitions; where formerly there was indifference, today there is everywhere evident a desire for knowledge. Graceful and charming are the girls of high-class families; and, with the benefits of education, they will, in the future, exert a tremendous influence in the development of their people.

The Korean at Home

A Korean house is spacious and curiously constructed. Under the floor is a set of flues that distribute the heat from the kitchen to all the other rooms. It is to this system that the occupant must look for warmth to keep him and his family from freezing during the long winter nights. Every floor is plastered over with mud to prevent the smoke from coming into the room. Over the mud floor a covering is placed, but otherwise, like a Japanese home, the rooms are bare of furniture. As in Japan, there are sliding, rice-paper screens, from which a room of any size may be formed. Koreans use a block for a pillow; and in this respect are like both Chinese and Japanese. The attics of Korean households are filled with a curiously miscellaneous



THE CHO-SEN HOTEL, SEOUL

collection, for the same family occupies a house for centuries. Anyone that wants to enter a house may walk into the outer apartment. A guest-room is at the service of stranger and friend alike. The inner quarters are reserved for the women and male relatives.

The people of the educated class have most agreeable manners. A certain caste is generally observed. In the social scale, the official class stand highest; then come the farmers, and next to the farmers are the merchants. Lowest of all are the butchers; until recently they were not permitted to wear hats. This is, of course, due to the fact that, formerly, Koreans were Buddhists and did not eat meat. In Korea, clothes make the man. The fact that a gentleman carries a cane indicates that he enjoys a certain social standing. Add to the cane a fan, and he goes up just a little in the social scale. At home, his white hat is discarded and he wears instead a curious head-covering made of horsehair; its shape is also an evidence of caste; in fact, wearing apparel of every kind denotes the social standing of the individual.

The eldest son inherits the entire estate of his father, and he is supposed to provide for his mother, as well as for the other members of the family. As a rule, the system works out very well. Through centuries

of custom, the son realizes and accepts the responsibility that is thus thrust upon him. Primitive household methods are found even in the capital city, where housewives smooth the family linen by pounding it with "ironing sticks," instead of using heated flat-irons. Modern stoves for cooking are almost unknown; as a rule, the ovens are of mud and are placed in the courtyard.

Once in her lifetime a girl may have a tiger skin placed over the sedan chair



IN THE GARDENS OF THE EAST PALACE, SEOUL



AUDIENCE CHAMBER, EAST PALACE

Like the Throne Room of the former Emperor, this apartment is a striking example of Korean decorative art

in which she is carried; and that is on the day when she becomes a bride. The tiger skin thus placed is a token of nobility; this distinction is therefore granted only on her wedding day. The Korean mother, accustomed to hardships, has all the stoicism of the Spartans of ancient days. She remains unmoved even when her daughter, weeping piteously, is taken from her home to wed a man whom she does not know and has never seen. One often hears the cries of a child emanating from a passing sedan chair. If he inquires what is causing the commotion, he is told that it is only a bride being taken to her husband's home.

A park that has recently been added to the attractions of Seoul, has become a fashionable promenade and a playground for the children, and marks the first effort that has been made to furnish Koreans with a place for recreation. In this park one sees mere boys, eight or nine years of age, wearing a little straw hat to indicate that they are engaged to be married.

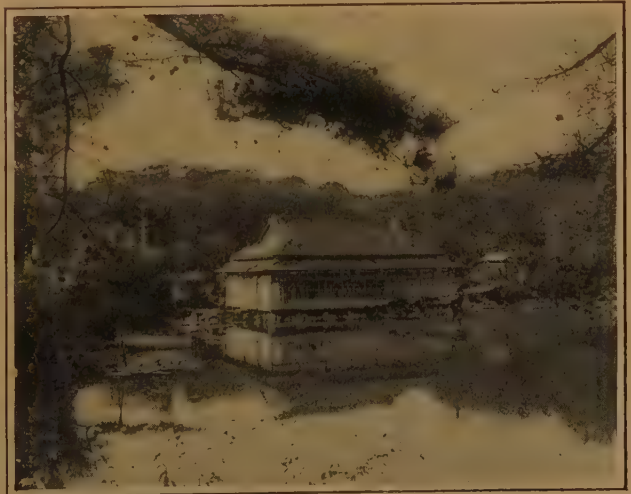
Even before annexation to Japan, there was in Seoul a Japanese quarter. The best shops are on the thoroughfares occupied by the Japanese. The Koreans make so little and depend so much on the Japanese that, aside from food, almost everything is purchased from Japanese shop-keepers. At an exposition recently held in Seoul, but five per cent. of the exhibits were Korean—the remainder were Japanese.

Two great thoroughfares intersect the capital city; one known as South Gate Street, the other as Bell, or East Gate Street. The Japanese have recently completed another broad avenue known as North Gate Street, which forms the entrance to the old North Palace, where formerly lived the Emperor of Korea.

Prince Yi, Senior, as the Japanese called the old emperor, was practically a prisoner in the palace.* In 1905, without the knowledge of the Japanese, Yi sent a commission to the Hague to protest against Japanese aggression; and for this he was compelled



THEATER AND SUMMER PAVILION, NORTH PALACE



PLEASURE GROUNDS OF THE EAST PALACE

*The ex-emperor died in 1919.

to abdicate in favor of his son. In 1895, the wife of the emperor, a gracious lady of cultivation, and skill in diplomatic affairs, was foully murdered by Japanese troops at the instigation of Count Miura, Japanese Resident in Seoul. The throne room of the one-time ruler is just inside the old North Gate. The platform upon which the throne stood is still on the dirt floor; the walls decorated in Korean style, are as brilliantly colored and as beautiful as ever; but the golden dragons on the ceiling no longer look down on courtly scenes; the throne room has been silent and deserted ever since the former emperor was forced to abdicate.

Within the walls surrounding the grounds of the North Palace are numerous buildings and pavilions, which at one time were used for summer and winter festivals. It is the intention of the Japanese Government to preserve these structures for historical reasons. Most interesting of all is the old summer pavilion where there was a theater; there His Majesty was accustomed to entertain his friends.

The real story of the passing of Korea is found in the grounds and buildings of the East Palace, where are now confined the young emperor and empress, called by the Japanese, "Prince and Princess Yi, Junior."

The grounds are spacious and the buildings beautiful. Within the walls, the royal pair still rule supreme. To their servants and retainers, all Koreans, they are still monarchs. Once outside the walls, they lose all royal rights and privileges. When I asked whether their Majesties were at liberty to go out when they pleased, my informant said, "Certainly!" But he did not tell me that whenever they left the grounds of the East Palace they were always attended by a guard of Japanese soldiers. An annual allowance of \$750,000, granted by the Japanese Government, enables the royal family to maintain the East Palace, and to employ about



From "The Passing of Korea"

A KOREAN LADY
In outdoor costume



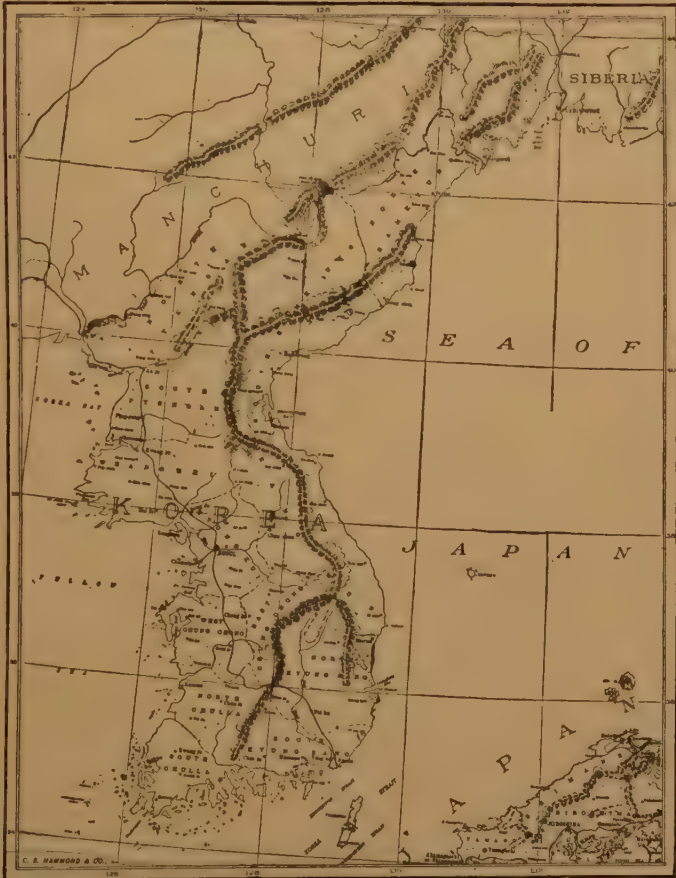
From "The Passing of Korea"

A BULLOCK CARRYING FIREWOOD
A familiar sight in Korean streets

K O R E A

four hundred servants. The living rooms are furnished in European style; the reception room is a combination of French, Japanese and Korean furnishings. There is also a billiard room, where the younger Prince Yi plays on an American billiard table. The throne room is a beautiful chamber where, beneath a canopy, the royal couple still sit in state when receiving their few loyal followers. It pleases them thus to play the part of sovereigns; but it is an idle game. Their kingdom has been taken from them, probably never to be restored. The former empress, an educated young woman, like her husband, has been forced to accept the bounty of the Japanese.

Korea, as a nation, is vanishing. The next generation will doubtless have Japanese customs, and one of the quaintest of all people will gradually be obliterated, on the very soil of their fathers.



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MAP OF KOREA

SUPPLEMENTARY READING

KOREA, THE HERMIT NATION	- - - - -	By William E. Griffis
KOREA AND HER NEIGHBORS	- - - - -	By Isabella Bird Bishop
IN KOREA WITH MARQUIS ITO	- - - - -	By George Trumbull Ladd
KOREA AND JAPAN	- - - - -	By Frank Elias
KOREA IN TRANSITION	- - - - -	By James S. Gale
KOREAN SKETCHES	- - - - -	By James S. Gale
THE PASSING OF KOREA*	- - - - -	By Homer Hulbert
STORY OF KOREA*	- - - - -	By J. H. Longford

See articles on Korea in the *Century Magazine*, February, 1920, and *Scribner's Magazine*, March, 1920.

* Out of print, but may be found in libraries.

* * Information concerning the above books may be had on application to the Editor of The Mentor.

T H E O P E N L E T T E R

What are we to think of the case of Korea? It is only within a short time that most of us have come to know about "The Hermit Nation." The testimony that we get from George Kennan and some other writers on conditions in the Far East, is that these simple survivors of ancient civilization appeared to be "lazy, ignorant, dishonest and lacking in thrift and ambition." That sounds bad for the humble Koreans, and inclines one to look favorably on the present-day domination and absorption of Korea by Japan.

★ ★ ★

But, as we say when we face a hasty conclusion: "Wait a minute!" A backward child should be watched over and helped along. That humane principle is as true of nations as of private families. A backward nation should have the care of a capable "Big-Brother-Nation" so that it can be taken in hand and put into step with the march of civilization. The right or the wrong of this civilizing process lies in how it is done. Is the nation that assumes this guardianship a brutal, overbearing bully, seeking only its own advantage in everything it does; or, is it a "Grandpa-Nation," prompted by principles of broad, human sympathy, and inspired by a sympathetic appreciation of the needs of the people that it has undertaken to guide and direct? So far as the evidence goes to show, the story of Korea under Japanese domination has been one of military tyranny, making for the complete extinction of Korean national character and institutions, and the establishment of all things Japanese in their stead. The thought in the Nipponese mind seems to be to make Korea thoroughly Japanese, so that Japan *can jump across the sea and plant a foot firmly on the mainland of Asia.*

Very shrewd, indeed—but a policy somewhat crafty for a member of an Ideal League of Nations.

★ ★ ★

How has Japan acquitted herself in her management of Korean affairs? Quickly, let us say that, in all matters that make for administrative efficiency, Japan has accomplished important, substantial re-

sults. In the reform and reorganization of governmental, judicial, financial, hygienic, commercial and agricultural conditions, and the improvement of building and transportation facilities, Japan has shown herself the forward-going nation that she is. But all these things are done for Japan, not for Korea. The attitude of Japan is as follows: "There shall be no more Korean history. You are now to be part of Japanese history. We give your Royal Family a nice little garden place to play in, but we will run and own your affairs. Your Royal Establishment has no more real standing than the quarters of a retired officer in an Old Soldiers' Home. We are the masters of Korea. We abolish Korean language from your schools. Korean history is excluded to make way for Japanese culture. You shall have no enlightenment except as Japan sees the light—and, in order that you may realize your position, we will make it clear to you by beating and bayoneting you, at times, for your own good. Harsh measures are needed to make simple people learn the lessons of civilization from conquering nations. To put it briefly—in the words of Mr. Dooley—"we mean to be a father to you if we have to break every bone in your bodies."

★ ★ ★

Now, if you were a small, backward nation, how would you like to have Japan for a *father*—especially if you were situated, geographically, so as to be necessary to the extension of Japan's power?

What is the answer? It seems to me that it lies in the Korean Declaration of Independence, which was issued at Seoul, and signed by 33 representatives of the various religions in Korea. In it we read the following sound, well tempered statement:

"To bind by force 20,000,000 resentful Koreans will mean not only loss of peace forever for this part of the Far East, but also will mean for the center of danger as well as safety the 400,000,000 of China, a suspicion of Japan, and an ever-deepening hatred. From this all the rest of the East will suffer. Today Korean independence would mean not only life and happiness for us, but also it would mean Japan's departure from an evil way and her exaltation to the place of true protector of the East, so that China, too, even in her dreams, would put all fear of Japan aside. This thought comes from no minor resentment, but from a large hope for the future."

W. D. Moffat

EDITOR





NE of many legends that relate to the creation of the Korean country concerns a bear that magically became a woman; the son of the earth's creator rode from the sky on the wind and breathed upon her, and a child was born that was bedded in mosses on the bank of a stream. It was he, Tangun, that became lord of the

Korean land, twenty-two hundred years before the birth of Christ.

Kija, a Chinese refugee who settled in the Korean peninsula in 1122 B. C., first named the country "Cho-sen" or "Cho-sun"—land of "Faultless Morning Calm." No historical records were kept during the two thousand years when the Kija dynasty was in power, as writing was not then a developed art.

The last king of Old Cho-sen, driven from the north by Chinese invaders, set up a new kingdom in the south, where he found a race of people that had supposedly originated in Formosa and the Malay peninsula. For a great many centuries the land of Korea was composed of three kingdoms—Koguryu, Silla, and Pakche. Ancient chronicles of Japan acknowledge the superiority of the people of Silla, who, with the aid of China, eventually became masters of the territory south of the Yalu River.

The foundations of modern Korea were laid in the seventh century, when the entire peninsula adopted the laws and language of the cultured Sillans. Following this important event, the influence of China redoubled. The literature, the arts, the science, the religion, the ethics of the great nation to the north predominated. "There can be no question as to the great debt that Korea owes to China," says Homer Hulbert, an authority of high standing. Yet, "ever since that day the Koreans have been existing in spite of rather than because of that remarkable invasion of Chinese civilization . . . and I am convinced that from that day began the deterioration of the Korean people, which has culminated in her present helpless condition."

Wang-gon, a great leader of the tenth century, revolted against the effeminacy of Silla, and founded Kori, or Koryu, a new kingdom, with more independent ideals. Under Wang-gon the soldier was no longer counted inferior to a scholar, a Buddhist monk to a Government official. In the thirteenth century Genghis Khan hurled

his savage Mongol army against Koryu and utterly destroyed it.

The "Golden Age of Korea" followed an age of slaughter and oppression; but in 1592 a great army of invasion came across the straits from Japan, and the country was again in turmoil. After the Japanese were repulsed, the domineering Manchus swarmed across the Korean plains and for a period held the people subjugated.

In the year of American Independence Korea had a population of about seven millions. During this time the Christian religion began to attract many of the native people. Western countries, desirous of gaining admission to the gates of the "Hermit Nation," sent traders and missionaries as their ambassadors. During the long reign of Yi-Hyong, which began in the year 1864, Korea entered into treaties with Japan, the United States and European nations which opened the way to commercial and diplomatic relations. The Chinese and Japanese went to war in 1894 over Korea. At the close of hostilities, it was agreed that henceforth Korea should be free from interference and vassalage; and the king was proclaimed emperor. But the freedom of the Korean people was short-lived. The Japanese, repudiating their covenant to maintain the independence of their neighbor, intrigued to secure control of the administration of the country, following the Russo-Japanese War. In 1910, Korea was annexed by Japan, and "Cho-sen" was officially adopted as the name of the territory.

As administrators, the Japanese have brought about a great many reforms that have been to the material advantage of Korea. Her methods and motives, however, are open to criticism. The great mass of Korean patriots declare they prefer to die, (and many have done so), rather than submit to the horrors of Japanese militarism, to systematic discrimination against the native populace, to suppression of the Korean language and literature, confiscation of private lands—in short, complete denationalization.



BEFORE the year 1907, when Japan established a Resident-General in Seoul, the capital, the Koreans were governed by laws that had existed since the infancy of the nation. The king was so highly revered that it was deemed sacrilege for him to mingle with any of his subjects except those that immediately surrounded

him. The officials nearest to the king were the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Right, the Minister of the Left, and, quite as important as any of these, an *opera bouffe* personage, the Censor, who examined and gave his opinion on every act before it became an edict. One of the six cabinet offices, the Ceremonial Department, had in its particular care the arrangement of State marriages, funerals and religious rites. "No one who has seen a royal procession in Seoul," says a traveler familiar with Korean life, "will doubt that the Minister of Ceremonies earned his salary." It was the duty of the Minister of Finance to superintend the collection of taxes and revenues. As a great part of the revenue was paid in grains, chiefly rice, one of the most important offices of the Department of Finance was concerned with providing adequate storage for the wealth contributed by the fields.

For a long period of years a commission was annually sent to China to pay tribute to the emperor. The country was relieved of the burden of this tribute after 1895, but continued to suffer the oppression of native officials, who openly plundered the public purse and systematically robbed and cheated the people. It is a matter of history that most of the just and capable officeholders of Korea literally lost their heads, and that "public offices were bought and sold like goods." The prices "ranged from fifty thousand dollars for a provincial governorship to five hundred dollars for a small magistrate's position." Terms of office were made as short as possible so that such barter should yield the greatest possible revenue to the profiteers in Seoul. In turn, the governor and lesser officials taxed the people under their control to make their period of office-holding as profitable as they could. A governor's aides did his bidding, but they were also useful as political thermometers to gauge the temper of the populace, and warn the chief executive of the province when they felt his demands were over-stepping the bounds of public patience.

Justice was granted a rich man, for a price, and denied the poor man. Until the Japanese-Chinese War, a prisoner condemned to capital punishment (for arson, murder, desecration of graves, robbery,

treason, or assaulting a parent) was decapitated, and his body dismembered so that parts of it might be sent about the country as a lesson to the people. After the year 1895, criminals sentenced to death were strangled or given poison to drink. Offending officials were banished to some remote corner of the country.

The country's downfall was primarily due to the unprogressiveness of the emperor, who, at the age of twelve, came to the throne, under the control of a regent, in 1864 and abdicated in 1907, surrendering his throne to the Crown Prince, and its authority to a representative of the Japanese Government. "Out of touch with the world he lived in," the emperor could not foresee the perils toward which his Ship of State was headed. The Koreans had always held the Japanese in contempt. They called them "island savages" and "foreign knaves." Korea prayed at the shrine of Confucius, while Japan followed after Buddha and the Shinto gods. "Japan exalted the sword, and Korea despised her, for she herself worshiped the pen. . . . In heart, sympathy and tradition Korea was out of touch with the Japanese, and yet here were these three gradually coming to occupy the same room, and the same bed, at the same time: the twentieth century, the Korean emperor, and the spirit of Japan; unsuited as fire and water, or wood and lightning, destined to resist until one of them was reduced to hopeless and non-resisting silence. In olden days, taxlevying, collecting, disbursing, transmitting, and other details of administration, provided an unlimited field for the science of 'squeeze.' Today no taxes pass through the Korean's hand, except what he pays, or what he receives after permission of a Japanese official." Educational matters, the collection of customs, the control of the army, the administration of justice—all affairs of government are in the ruthlessly efficient hands of Japan. The emperor, robbed of even the semblance of power, lost not only his throne but his title, and is known to the world as Prince Yi. In 1919, Japanese civil governors were appointed throughout the province, in place of military chiefs, whose rule even Japan declared to be "unsatisfactory."





HE peninsula of Korea, 600 miles long and 135 miles wide, pends from the northeastern coast of Asia between the Japan Sea and the Yellow Sea. In area, it is about as large as Kansas, and about half as large as Japan. The islands of Japan lie to the southeast, across the broad Korea Straits. In the tenth century the

whole territory took the name of a newly arisen kingdom, Kori, or Koryu. Since then, the country has had almost as many names as it has had wars and rulers. However, the world has continued the use of "Korea," of Chinese derivation, and has not yet fallen into the habit of calling the new province of Japan by the name, Cho-sen, revived since annexation in 1910.

An airplane heading due west from Seoul (at about the center of the country) would fly above Peking, Teheran, Constantinople, Rome, New York and San Francisco. To the northeast is Vladivostok, and westward the historic town of Port Arthur. A barrier of superb peaks separates Korea from Manchuria. A low range of mountains parallels the east coast, and a multitude of foothills spread out from the base of the main peaks, the highest of which has an altitude of 2500 feet. The Koreans have a great deal of sentiment for their mountains. They believe they are the dwelling places of the great spirits who protect the living and watch over the graves of the dead. Another prominent physical feature of the country for which the people have great reverence is the River Han, one of four principal streams that water the valleys, draining toward the west. The Koreans call themselves "Men of Han," and their country, "the Land of Han."

The west coast, facing China, has the best soil for cultivation, the largest rivers, and the finest harbors. From a distance, the aspect of Korea is unlovely and forbidding. Its peaks, "bare as the head of a Buddha priestess," overlook a coast line that is perilously rocky and tide-swept. The bleakness of Korea's heights is especially marked, says Dr. Horace Underwood, "if one has come from the terraced hills of Japan. Tradition has it that the Korean, in his desire to maintain his independence, deemed that he could do it best by a determined exclusion of all outsiders, and, with the intention of making Korea appear desolate and unattractive, he purposely devastated the whole coast. . . . When one travels in the interior, one is charmed with the many fertile hills and valleys, teeming with grain and yielding such crops that there is ample for Korea's millions, leaving a large balance in all good years for export."

It is agreed among students of conditions in Korea that the undeveloped resources of this backward child among the nations

are capable of wide exploitation. There are hoards of minerals within her fastnesses—graphite, lead, copper, iron, coal, silver and gold; her seas swarm with fish; endowed with an excellent climate and a variety of good soils, the country has an abundant acreage suitable for the growing of grains, fruits, tobacco and vegetables. Rice is the staff of Korean life. Choicest of Korean fruits is the persimmon, which grows to a luscious perfection unknown in other countries. The sun shines uninterruptedly for weeks at a time. Then comes the "great rain," the *chang-ma*, and after it the "great great rain." In the winter it is not unusual for the thermometer to register zero, and the summers are correspondingly hot. When American trolley cars first ran in Seoul, about twenty years ago, there was a protracted drought, which "ground-prophets" attributed to "the devil that runs the thunder and lightning wagon." A roaring mob destroyed a number of the evil-working electric cars, to break the spell upon the weather.

Cho-sen, the tranquil morning land, is afflicted by few of the noises that torture Western ears. Unpaved roads that wander as they will, up hill and down, are trodden by the patient feet of men, ponies and bullocks. What loads they carry, these Korean beasts of burden! A coolie will trudge miles with a five-hundred-pound weight on his back. One often sees bullocks bearing sticks of fire-wood piled in pyramids in racks of native fashioning. Very reposeful are the highways, and inviting, too, the straw-thatched huts made of mud, papered in white. Floors are covered with yellow paper, toughened by oil, and the windows are also of paper that lets a faint light through. The garments worn by the occupants of the houses are usually of white washable materials, though younger members of the family sometimes choose bright pinks, blues and yellows for their outer dress.

The Korean is hospitable—to the limit of his purse, and sometimes beyond; he is thrifless, but very proud—there are few beggars on the streets of Korea. He prefers old ways to new. "If you try to shorten the road by going across lots, you fall in with highwaymen," he warns. But his dream of contented lethargy has been rudely disturbed. If the Japanese are successful in their plans, Korea will soon blossom like the rose for the benefit of colonists from across the straits.





WHETHER in architecture, or in education, in dress, death or marriage, hoary customs rule. Custom explains everything," says James Gale, for twenty years a resident in Korea. "What about this absurdity?" asks someone. 'Oh, it's a custom.' 'Yes, but see here, why are the dead propped up on sticks and not buried?'

"Oh, it's a custom."

"Do you sometimes marry off children as early as nine years of age?"

"Yes, that's a custom."

"What about the dolmens set up all through these valleys like tables of the gods, what do they mean?"

"They were set up by the Chinese invaders, thousands of years ago, to crush out the ground influence that brought forth the Korean warriors."

"Then why don't you roll them off and get back your lost vigor?"

"As it was, is now and ever shall be," is the only reply.

"In Korea there is ceremony, gentleness, deference, kindness, but for comparison and conclusion and action there is no room."

It is an inviolable custom that women of the better classes shall never be seen on the street without their *changot*, a long garment which is drawn over the head and close about the face. As a rule a lady passes through the streets in a vehicle resembling a closed chair, borne by two carriers.

The Korean house is but a house. The word "home" does not exist in the language, nor are there any traditions of "home life" observed among any but Christian families. A wife is respected only in her capacity as mother. She cannot divorce her husband; but for "incurable disease, theft, childlessness, infidelity, jealousy, incompatibility with her parents-in-law, and a quarrelsome disposition," she can be sent back to her father's house, disgraced. When Time fades the cheek of the wife, her husband may bring in a younger woman to share her place. Though a comparatively recent law gives Korean wives the right to object to the introduction of these youthful usurpers, so submissive have they become through centuries of repression and indignity that few wives do other than consent respectfully to their lord's wishes.

Practically the only period of freedom enjoyed by a girl born to Korean parents is before the age of ten or twelve years. After that time she spends most of her life inside the house, and sees only her own family and close relatives. When still a child she usually marries, though, according to present-day laws, she may, if she chooses, refuse to take a husband until she is sixteen. After marriage, she con-

tinues her life of seclusion, seeing no men that are not related by blood or marriage, eating apart from her husband and children, slighted and lonely. The Korean bride is married "not with any high hilarity such as attends wedding days in Western countries. She goes with blood-red marks on her face and her eyes sealed, turned this way and that, stood up, set down, moved here and there, pulled and pushed through all the wooden ceremony of marriage, till at last she emerges with three powers set over her head—husband, mother-in-law and father-in-law."

Daily conduct in Korea is founded upon the Five Laws of Confucius: Between father and son, friendship; between king and courtier, righteousness; between husband and wife, deference; between old and young, degree; between friends, faith. Allied with the five laws are the Five Virtues—love, righteousness, ceremony, knowledge, faith; and the Five Original Elements—metal, wood, water, fire and earth. The observation of these fifteen laws, virtues and elements constitute "the soul of Korean society."

The symbols of religious fervor are seldom evident in the streets of Korea. Yet the Korean is at heart a zealot. Underlying the belief of Buddhists and Confucianists is the elemental worship of spirits. "As a general thing," declares Homer Hulbert, the Korean scholar, "we may say that the all-around Korean will be a Confucianist when in society, a Buddhist when he philosophizes, and a spirit-worshiper when he is in trouble." Dragons, devils, nature gods, elfs, imps and goblins, spirits of the dead, all these enter into the religious life of the average native. Christianity has sown fruitful seed in Korea, and spread its influence to the uttermost parts of the nation. But above all other deities, cults and customs, the Korean is devoted to the worship of his ancestors. The place where they lie is chosen for its fair outlook, and must not be disturbed, no matter at what cost; on certain days of the year the faithful descendants must come, from no matter how great a distance, to pray and sacrifice in the "tablet house" or at the grave. Now-a-days, the land is filled with loud wailing, for the irreverent "wheel-devils" are mowing through the ancestral hills, "cutting off luck and prosperity, screaming their wild note in the most sacred valleys."





THE language of Korea is a strange mosaic, with a grammar identical with that of Japan, and a great number of its word roots taken from the Chinese. Though never spoken by the Koreans, Chinese has for centuries been the written language of literary men of the country, and the medium used in composing documents and

official papers. As in Chinese, the written characters of Korean are read from right to left. The language is musical and oratorically effective, due to its soft-sounding consonants and vowels and the grammatical peculiarity which emphasizes the verb by placing it last in the sentence. Korean, we are told, "bears almost precisely the same relation to Chinese that English does to Latin. English has retained its own distinct grammatical structure, while drawing an immense number of words from the Romance dialects for purposes of embellishment and precision. Korean has never surrendered a single point to Chinese grammar, and yet has borrowed largely from the Chinese glossary. Chinese may be called the Latin of the Far East. For, just as Rome through her higher civilization lent thousands of words to the semi-savages hovering along her borders, so China has furnished all the surrounding peoples with their scientific, legal, philosophical and religious terminology." An educated Korean must learn both spoken language and "book language," for neither one has all the grammatical forms of the other. Words cannot be set down as spoken, but must be rewritten to comply with literary usage.

Early in the twelfth century a noble of China brought to Korea a set of sacred books, and from that time the Koreans, literate and illiterate, high-class and low-class, have venerated the pen and those gifted in the wielding of it—historians, essayists, novelists, poets, chroniclers of folk lore. As the two-handed sword is the revered symbol of Japan, so "the brush pen with the bamboo handle would be the choice of all as the symbol for Korea." Before the Japanese substituted teachers of their own race for Korean instructors, and forbade the use of the Korean language in the schools, children spent nearly all their lesson time in reading and in writing original compositions. It is an interesting index to the national pride in learning that the common form of address, even when speaking to a laborer who has never learned to read and write, is "School-man." Thus the humblest "share in the shadow of the glory that goes with literature."

In the public library at Seoul, there are good collections of historical and biograph-

ical works, and ponderous volumes on law, government, geography and medicine. Few Koreans can afford to possess such books, and those that have them in their private libraries are proverbially miserly about lending them out, and are even slow to exhibit them to friends visiting in their homes. It seems all the more remarkable, therefore, that the literary profession should rank so high in the national estimation, since the great mass of the people have little opportunity to own or read books. The scarcity of books has inspired a curious custom. When someone is desirous of "reading" a good story, he sends for a professional storyteller, who brings with him a drummer and proceeds to the dramatic rendering of a favorite tale.

Korean fiction writers customarily confine themselves to short stories or novellettes dealing with history and adventure. Stories of love and romance have no place in standard Korean literature, because, we suppose, the country's laws affecting the conduct of young people before marriage forbid voluntary love-making. Maidens of discretion have no love stories, and so only the loves of dancing girls and slaves appear in Korean fiction.

A Korean poem is crisp and short, but each word is chosen to convey the ultimate in meaning. To meet the understanding of Western readers, the concise expression of native poets must needs be amplified. Thus, the poem:

This month, third month, willow becomes green;

Oriole preens herself;

Butterfly flutters about.

Boy, bring either. Must sing.

when expanded by an English translator, reads thus:

The willow catkin bears the vernal blush of summer's dawn

When winter's night is done.

The oriole that preens herself aloft on swaying bough

Is summer's harbinger.

The butterfly, with noiseless ful-ful of her pulsing wing,

Marks off the summer hour.

Quick, boy! My sither! Do its strings accord? 'Tis well. Strike up,

For I must sing.



THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH



S Literature is the most highly regarded of the Korean professions, so Agriculture is the most dignified of its occupations. We learn that "a gentleman of the purest blood can engage in farming without soiling his escutcheon, but to be a merchant or broker would be beneath his dignity." The farming implements employed

today in Korean "paddy-fields" are as ancient as the traditions of the land itself—the bullock-drawn plough differs little from the one used by the farmers of centuries ago. Out-of-date as are their agricultural tools and methods, the native agriculturists have a good fundamental knowledge of soil cultivation, drainage and irrigation. Ingenious, too, are many of their devices for grinding grain by hand and water-power, sawing wood, building walls. A great part of Korea's farmlands are given to the growing of rice, millet and other grains; but flax, cotton and ginseng root are extensively cultivated. The paper-mulberry tree supplies a tough bark from which a highly prized paper is made for home use and export.

Thousands of Korean laborers earn their livelihood by collecting wood, grasses and fagots for fuel. Bullocks are largely used to transport the fuel, but men and children do their share. Boys and girls, dressed in long baggy gowns are often to be seen in the fields or on the hillsides raking up grass and bits of wood, which they carry to their homes on their backs in woven rope baskets.

Up and down the coast, from Gensan to Fusan, prolific harvests of fish are gathered and prepared as food. The dried *ling* is to the Koreans what codfish is to Newfoundlanders. As there are no salt deposits in the country, a considerable number of people are engaged in evaporating sea water, from which a strong coarse salt is obtained.

The indolence and unprogressiveness of the natives is exemplified by the neglect of certain industries which, properly nurtured, should flourish in the peninsula. When an army from Japan swept the country three centuries ago, they removed to their own land an entire colony of Korean pottery workers, whose ware was so admirable as to please the critical eye of the invaders. On Japanese soil the craft was developed and exploited until Satsuma ware became celebrated throughout the world. In certain sheltered valleys of the peninsula the silk worm and the cotton plant could have been grown with greater

success, if the Korean cultivators had been as enterprising as their neighbors. The Japanese have undertaken to advance these industries, and the allied crafts, weaving and dyeing. The newcomers, as well as Americans and Englishmen, have found more profitable methods of extracting the gold from Korean rocks and rivers. The native miners have a novel means of their own for opening up veins of gold. When they have heated a ledge of rock by building a fire on it, they split the quartz by throwing on cold water. Having extracted the metal with their age-old implements, they then grind the ore to a coarse powder by rolling it beneath huge rocks, manipulated by levers.

In streets and byways one comes upon hat menders, plying their useful trade, and makers of ironing sticks with which garments are pounded smooth after washing. Blacksmiths, dressed in white, are discovered shoeing small Manchurian ponies, securely trussed to an over-head frame-work. A grocery store exposes its wares on the outer wall and walk. The Koreans eat little meat. The two words one hears most frequently in the Hermit Nation are *ton* and *pap*—money and rice. Formerly the Chinese *cash* was the currency of the land, and a wagon-load of pieces was necessary to pay a bill of reasonably large proportions. The *cash* piece was supplanted by the *nickel*, and, more recently still, by Japanese currency and paper money.

Though women are counted of little use in Korean households, except as mothers, it is not unusual for them to help out depleted family finances by adding to their duties some outside occupation. A woman of good class may not keep a shop, except one where wine is sold. A slave attends customers, the proprietress always remaining in seclusion. Ladies may also cultivate silk worms and bees without losing caste. Their sisters of lower rank in the social scale may sell goods and eatables, they may embroider and sew for money, make combs and head-bands, keep inns for travelers. Korean women frequently study medicine and are much in demand as physicians.

KOREA AND JAPAN

WILL Japan finally succeed in converting these Koreans into Japanese? Will she succeed in the long run in this process of denationalization and renationalization?

It would be effrontery for me to pass judgment on this question, and it is dangerous even to hazard a guess as to the outcome. Perhaps one ought not even to approach the problem in this didactic spirit. It is a moving spectacle, a vast drama, and it is perhaps for us, the spectators, not to forecast the outcome or to criticize, not to hiss the villain or applaud the hero, but to look—and learn. For what is now being tried in Korea, despite certain new circumstances, is no new thing under the sun. We have seen something like this before in Judea, in Persia, in Gaul, in Britain, in Ireland, India, Egypt, Alsace, and Poland.

Yet one cannot quite help guessing, and it is at least permissible to ask questions. And the one most significant and searching question seems to be this: Can you supersede a language, a civilization, and an ancient tradition in a compact, growing people like the Korean? In another thirty years the Korean population will probably be doubled and children will be born faster than they can be taught Japanese. The school equipment must be vastly increased indeed if a real change of tongues is to be accomplished, and even then the language spoken at home will be Korean. What language the business men use is not significant compared with what the peasants speak. Can the *deracination* of Korean nationality be accomplished, therefore, in fifty years or in a hundred or in two hundred? And time is an element in the problem. If Korea is to be a bulwark of Japan, it must be composed of loyal people. The chances are that with the growth of education, with new ideas of democracy and nationality seeping in from abroad, Korea, if it is to be forcibly Japanized, will be a source of weakness rather than of strength. Prussia, with a six-to-one population, failed to Prussianize Poland. Can Japan, with only a three-to-one ascendancy, Japanize Korea?

The crux of the problem will appear when, and if, Japan is in danger. Will the Koreans run to the Japanese colors? Will they enlist as the Scotch enlist under an English king or the Hanoverians under a king of Prussia? Or will they hold aloof? Or will they revolt?

The question is not for us to decide. It will depend in part at least upon Japan's wisdom and moderation, upon her prowess and luck. And it will also depend upon the direction in which the whole world moves in this pregnant century.

Walter E. Weyl, in *Harper's Magazine*.

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